

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the application. In the amendment above, claims 1-7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 have been canceled, claims 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18 have been amended, and new claims 19-24 have been added. Applicant makes such amendments without prejudice to pursuing the originally presented or cancelled subject matter in a later continuation application.

Claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Chen (U.S. Patent No. 5,208,327). Although Applicant disagrees, those claims have been cancelled to expedite prosecution of allowable subject matter.

Claims 3 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Chen and Bauman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,668,270). Although Applicant disagrees, those claims have been cancelled to expedite prosecution of allowable subject matter.

In view of the above claim amendments and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objections and rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7-18 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims but indicated to be allowable if placed in appropriate independent form.

Claims 1 and 7 have been canceled and new independent claim 19 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 1 and 7. Claim 8 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 19.

Claims 2 and 9 have been canceled and new independent claim 20 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 2 and 9. Claim 10 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 20.

Claims 3 and 11 have been canceled and new independent claim 21 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 3 and 11. Claim 12 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 21.

Claims 4 and 13 have been canceled and new independent claim 22 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 4 and 13. Claim 14 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 22.

Claims 5 and 15 have been canceled and new independent claim 23 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 5 and 15. Claim 16 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 23.

Claims 6 and 17 have been canceled and new independent claim 24 has been added which recites the limitations of claims 6 and 17. Claim 18 has been amended to depend from new independent claim 24.

Summary

Applicant respectfully requests the examiner grant early allowance of this application. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicant via telephone if such communication would expedite this issuance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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